

### **Remarks**

The Office action dated July 11, 2008 has been received and carefully considered. Claim 9 has been amended and new claim 21 has been added. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

The Office action required a restriction between Group I (claims 1-8) and Group II (claims 9-11 and 13-20). Applicant hereby provisionally elects Group I, with traverse.

The Office action alleges that the inventions of Group I and Group II do not relate to a single general inventive concept because the special technical feature of Group I (counterface surface properties) is not the same as the special technical feature of Group II (electrolytically grinding a surface of a bearing). However, amended independent claim 9 does not comprise the method step of electrolytically grinding the curved surface of the counterface, and independent claim 11 additionally does not comprise the method step of electrolytically grinding a surface of a bearing. Thus, the Office action's characterization of the special technical feature of Group II is not proper.

Furthermore, PCT Rule 13 does not require that every special technical feature be identical in order for unity of invention to be present. PCT Rule 13.1 requires only that the claims share one common special technical feature. MPEP § 1893.03(d) ("A group of inventions is considered linked to form a single general inventive concept where there is a technical relationship among the inventions that involves *at least one* common or corresponding special technical feature." (emphasis added)). In the present application, the inventions of Group I and Group II do share a common special technical feature. For example, claim 1 recites a self-lubricating bearing having a counterface surface, independent claim 9 recites a method of constructing a self-lubricating bearing comprising providing a counterface having a curved

surface, and independent claim 11 recites a method of operating a self-lubricating bearing comprising providing a counterface surface. Additionally, each of claim 1, claim 9, and claim 11 recites that the counterface surface has a surface finish of less than 20nm and a hardness of less than in the region of 1000VPN. Thus, claim 1 (Group I) and claims 9 and 11 (Group II) share a common special technical feature related to counterface surface properties.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn and that all claims be examined together in one application. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at the telephone number provided with any questions regarding this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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